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REMARKS

Claims 1-46 are pending in this application. Claims 1-46 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Hebert in view of Leon. Claims 1, 10, 20, 30, 37 and 42 are currently amended.

Claim 1 distinguishes the cited combination because the back-end device is operable to contemporaneously save state information relating to multiple communication sessions associated with multiple wireless access points. Claim 1 has been amended to emphasize this feature, support for which can be found, for instance, in the Summary at page 5, lines 24-27. Hebert teaches a failover mechanism in which a redundant network connection provides protection for a primary network connection, and Leon teaches a wireless communication system. Unlike the presently claimed invention, the Hebert redundant network connection provides protection only for the primary connection, and no other network connections. It may be helpful to understand the different intended purposes of the Hebert system and the system described in this application to appreciate this distinguishing difference. As shown for example in Fig. 4 of Hebert, primary and secondary interface card pairs (420, 440, 422, 442) are associated with primary and secondary network connections (430, 432). The secondary NICs and secondary connection are used in the event of failure of the primary connection or primary NICs. In contrast, the presently claimed invention is not primarily directed to failure recovery, but rather to hand-off and other transient disruptions. As stated in the specification at page 5, line 32-page 6, line 3, "when there is a disruption in communication for a particular TE device or a 'hand-off' is otherwise desirable or necessary, the BE device saves state information relating the TE device, and uses the saved state information to subsequently re-establish communication with the TE device through the same or a different TAP device." Because the presently claimed invention primarily supports hand-offs and other transient disruptions rather than failures,

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multiple access points are supported. Hence, claim 1 distinguishes the cited combination by reciting "the back end device operable to contemporaneously save state information relating to multiple communication sessions associated with multiple wireless access point devices." For the reasons stated above, withdrawal of the rejection of claim 1, and associated dependent claims 2-9 is requested.

The difference described above is further emphasized in claim 6 which recites that the saved state information is used to re-establish the communication session through the same access point. The Office suggests that this feature is shown in Hebert at col. 7, lines 13-45. However, the cited section of Hebert states that upon completing a failover to the secondary connection another failover back to the primary connection is possible. In contrast, the invention recited in claim 6 does not utilize a secondary access point, but rather re-establishes communication with the same access point without first establishing communication with some other access point. Again, it may be helpful to understand the different intended purposes of the Hebert system and the system described in this application. As described above, the secondary NICs and secondary connection of Hebert are used in the event of failure of the primary, whereas the presently claimed invention is primarily directed to hand-off and other transient disruption. This is not to say that the present invention could not facilitate failover. It might do so. However, the presently claimed invention does not specifically maintain a protection path. For the reasons stated above, Applicant again requests that the rejection of claim 6 be withdrawn.

Claim 10 distinguishes the cited combination by reciting that the state maintenance logic is operable to contemporaneously save state information relating to multiple communication sessions associated with multiple wireless access point devices. As discussed above, the secondary NICs and secondary connection of Hebert supports only the primary connection.

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Hence, the cited combination fails to teach or suggest either a back-end device or the recited state maintenance logic. Claims 11-19 further distinguish claim 10 and are allowable for the same reasons as claim 10. Applicant therefore requests that the rejections of claims 10-19 be withdrawn.

Claims 20, 30, 37, and 42 have been amended to emphasize at least some of the distinguishing features discussed above, and are allowable for the reasons already stated with regard to claims 1 and 10. Claims 21-29, 31-36, 38-41, and 43-46 are dependent claims which further distinguish their respective independent claims, and are allowable for the same reasons as those independent claims. Applicant therefore requests that the rejections of claims 20-46 be withdrawn.

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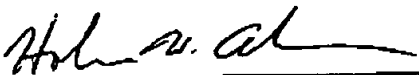
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Applicants have made a diligent effort to place the claims in condition for allowance. However, should there remain unresolved issues that require adverse action, it is respectfully requested that the Examiner telephone Holmes W. Anderson, Applicants' Attorney at 978-264-6664 so that such issues may be resolved as expeditiously as possible.

For these reasons, and in view of the above amendments, this application is now considered to be in condition for allowance and such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,

November 10, 2004
Date


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Docket No. 120-201
Dd: 12/19/2004